“The Poets, Priests, and Paperbacks” book club headed up by English teacher Mr. Kuhn, gives students the opportunity to read a book in their spare time and then join with other students to discuss the book in a fishbowl style discussion.

A fishbowl is a way of discussing literature in a way where all students can participate. There are five seats in the middle and the remaining students sit in a ring around the five. The only students permitted to speak are the ones in the middle, and the only way to get in on the conversation is to tap someone out of the middle.

Mr. Kuhn is trying a new style of discussion in the March meeting of the club where all the students sit together. His hope is that it will be less intimidating and the shy students will participate a little more.

“I started the club because I wanted to combine my love for literature with my concern with catholic spirituality. I learned a great deal through connecting my faith with literature,” said Mr. Kuhn.

The books chosen for the club are books that have a spiritual connection. Books like *Mr. Blue*, which is about a modern day St. Francis who gives up his wealth to better focus on his faith and love for God.

“I try to choose books that are first, engaging, and second, books that involve religious themes or ideas,” said Kuhn.

To further the conversation, a priest from our dioceses participates in the discussion. This allows students to discuss their ideas with a person who knows so much about the Catholic faith. It helps to keep the spiritual a dimension in the discussion.

“I want students to recognize that Catholic values can be found outside of the religion class, in literature,” said Mr. Kuhn.

Some students may feel that the only place that religion can be found is in class or in church, but there are many places that they can branch out and explore their faith.

“My favorite part of the club is watching students willingly participate. I like knowing that they are sacrificing their free time and energy to these discussions. The resulting dialogues are inspiring. I am often humbled by the profound faith of some students,” said Mr. Kuhn.

Mr. Blue, the book discussed in the February meeting, is being integrated into the religion department and will be a part of Mrs. Tarney’s class next year

“I want to see us discuss books that find their way into part of the curriculum. And maybe part of a class that offers works of literature that are comparable to the club,” said Mr. Kuhn.

“I want wider participation of all four grades and a wider variety of titles, suggested by the students,” said Kuhn.

The club is a great way to get involved in meaningful discussions with your peers and a great way to better your literary knowledge.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the next discussion see Mr. Kuhn in room 219.

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